



United States Department of Agriculture
National Agricultural Statistics Service

FARM LABOR



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Florida

The number of workers paid by farmers and agricultural services totaled 56,000 during the survey week of April 11 through 17. Farmers hired 50,000 workers, 2,000 more than last quarter, and 4,000 more than a year ago. Agricultural services provided 6,000 paid workers, down 1,000 when compared to last quarter and last year.

Temperatures in major Florida cities averaged one to two degrees above normal with little rainfall. Scant precipitation affected pasture conditions and newly planted row crops. In some northern counties, irrigation was needed to continue field crop planting. Planting season for most spring vegetables was ending. Citrus producers harvested 5.97 million boxes during the survey week, down from 8.03 million boxes harvested during January 10-16, 2010. Vegetable growers shipped about 100 million pounds of vegetables and non-citrus fruits during the survey week, down from the 144 million in January 10-16, 2010.

The April combined farmer and agricultural all hired worker wage rate average was \$10.29 per hour, 50 cents less than the \$10.79 paid last quarter, and 4 cents less than the \$10.33 paid a year ago. Farmers paid an average of \$10.22 per hour, 62 cents less than the \$10.84 paid in the previous quarter, and 11 cents less than the \$10.33 paid the previous year. Agricultural services paid workers an average of \$10.80 per hour, 30 cents more than last quarter, and 50 cents more than last year.

United States

Hired Workers Up 10 Percent, Wage Rates Down Fractionally From a Year Ago

There were 997,000 hired workers on the Nation's farms and ranches during the week of April 11-17, 2010, up 10 percent from a year ago. Of these hired workers, 737,000 were hired directly by farm operators. Agricultural service employees on farms and ranches made up the remaining 260,000 workers.

Farm operators paid their hired workers an average wage of \$10.83 per hour during the April 2010 reference week, down 1 cent from a year earlier. Field workers received an average of \$10.04 per hour, up 5 cents from last April, while livestock workers earned \$10.31 per hour compared with \$10.25 a year earlier. The field and livestock worker combined wage rate, at \$10.13 per hour, was up 6 cents from last year. The number of hours worked averaged 39.8 for hired workers during the survey week, down 1 percent from a year ago.

The largest increases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Corn Belt I (Illinois, Indiana, and Ohio), Northeast II (Delaware, Maryland, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania), and Lake (Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin) regions. Weather conditions in all three of these regions were considerably drier than last year's very wet and muddy reference week. This allowed spring fieldwork and planting activities to progress rapidly. Therefore, the demand for hired workers was much higher.

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Florida All Hired Workers, Hours Worked, and Wage Rates by Type of Worker, with Comparisons

Employer, year, and survey week	Number of hired workers			Number of hours worked	Wages paid by type of worker ¹		
	All	Expected to work			All	Field	Livestock
		150 days or more	149 days or less				
Hired by Farmers ²	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(hours Per week)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
April 11 – 17, 2010	50	41	9	37.2	10.22	9.10	10.00
January 10 – 16, 2010.....	48	43	5	37.1	10.84	9.60	10.35
October 11 – 17, 2009.....	46	41	5	38.6	10.65	9.30	10.10
July 12 – 18, 2009	36	32	4	37.3	10.51	9.14	9.50
April 12 – 18, 2009	46	39	7	38.3	10.33	9.15	9.35
January 11 – 17, 2009.....	38	31	7	37.8	10.16	8.95	9.45
October 12 – 18, 2008.....	38	32	6	39.7	10.09	8.90	9.30
July 6 – 12, 2008.....	42	39	3	40.9	9.90	8.84	9.25
April 6 – 12, 2008	51	45	6	41.5	10.25	9.32	9.59
Hired by Agricultural Services ³							
April 11 – 17, 2010	6			41.0	10.80		
January 10 – 16, 2010.....	7			41.0	10.50		
October 11 – 17, 2009.....	3			44.0	11.35		
July 12 – 18, 2009	2			43.0	10.65		
April 12 - 18, 2009.....	7			33.0	10.30		
January 11 - 17, 2009.....	9			37.0	10.05		
October 12 – 18, 2008.....	3			42.0	10.05		
July 6 - 12, 2008.....	2			43.0	9.85		
April 6 - 12, 2008	8			40.0	10.05		
Hired by Farmers & Agricultural Services ³							
April 11 – 17, 2010	56				10.29		
January 10 – 16, 2010.....	55				10.79		
October 11 – 17, 2009.....	49				10.70		
July 12 – 18, 2009	38				10.52		
April 12 - 18, 2009.....	53				10.33		
January 11 - 17, 2009.....	47				10.14		
October 12 – 18, 2008.....	41				10.09		
July 6 - 12, 2008.....	44				9.90		
April 6 - 12, 2008	59				10.22		

¹ Includes all paid staff, supervisors, and field and livestock workers. Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided to some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

² Excludes agricultural services workers.

³ Data are for agricultural services performed on the farm by custom service units. Blank data cells for these statistics are not included in the State-Regional tables.

Hired Workers by Farmers, Wage Rates, and Hours Worked, Selected States, with Comparisons

[Excludes Agricultural Service workers]

Item	Florida	California	Texas & Oklahoma	Arizona & New Mexico	Hawaii	United States ¹
	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)	(1,000)
All hired workers						
April 11–17, 2010	50	140	55	18	6	737
January 10-16, 2010.....	48	*129	55	19	6	*602
April 12–18, 2009	46	138	62	20	6	680
Expected to work						
150 days or more						
April 11–17, 2010	41	121	45	16	5	586
January 10-16, 2010.....	43	*111	47	18	5	*514
April 12–18, 2009	39	119	53	19	5	554
149 days or less						
April 11–17, 2010	9	19	10	2	1	151
January 10-16, 2010.....	5	*18	8	1	1	*88
April 12–18, 2009	7	19	9	1	1	126
	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)	(hours per week)
Hours worked by all hired workers						
April 11–17, 2010	37.2	43.1	39.1	40.7	36.6	39.8
January 10-16, 2010.....	37.1	*40.9	36.5	49.4	35.5	*37.2
April 12–18, 2009	38.3	43.9	40.7	45.2	36.8	40.1
	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)	(dollars per hour)
Wages by type of worker ²						
Field						
April 11–17, 2010	9.10	10.00	9.56	9.18	11.65	10.04
January 10-16, 2010.....	9.60	*10.30	9.01	8.47	11.70	*10.09
April 12–18, 2009	9.15	9.96	9.67	9.16	11.30	9.99
Livestock						
April 11–17, 2010	10.00	11.10	10.25	10.97	13.90	10.31
January 10-16, 2010.....	10.35	*11.20	10.21	9.59	13.60	*10.28
April 12–18, 2009	9.35	10.85	9.93	9.44	13.20	10.25
Field and livestock combined						
April 11–17, 2010	9.25	10.21	9.90	10.25	11.84	10.13
January 10-16, 2010.....	9.70	*10.52	9.66	8.90	11.82	*10.17
April 12–18, 2009	9.17	10.14	9.80	9.29	11.40	10.07
All hired worker wage rate						
April 11–17, 2010	10.22	11.12	10.30	11.10	13.99	10.83
January 10-16, 2010.....	10.84	*11.57	10.00	9.44	14.14	*11.05
April 12–18, 2009	10.33	11.07	10.40	10.10	13.36	10.84

¹ Excludes Alaska.

² Benefits, such as housing and meals, are provided to some workers but the values are not included in the wage rates.

The largest decreases in the number of hired workers from last year occurred in the Southern Plains (Oklahoma and Texas), Southeast (Alabama, Georgia, and South Carolina), and Mountain III (Arizona and New Mexico) regions. In the Southern Plains region, heavy rains and flooding occurred in parts of Texas, halting most field activities and lowering the demand for hired workers. Insufficient soil moisture in the Southeast region kept field preparation and planting of spring crops behind normal. This reduced the need for hired workers. In the Mountain III region, vegetable harvest was winding down. Therefore, fewer hired workers were required.

Hired worker wage rates were generally below a year ago in most regions. The largest decreases occurred in the Corn Belt II (Iowa and Missouri), Northeast II, Corn Belt I, Lake, Pacific (Oregon and Washington), and Appalachian I (North Carolina and Virginia) regions. In the Corn Belt I and II and Appalachian I regions, the lower wages were due to a higher percentage of part time workers. There were more salaried workers working more hours in the Northeast II and Pacific regions. This kept hourly wage levels below a year earlier. In the Lake region, reduced demand for highly skilled workers on dairies led to the lower average wage.

Survey Procedures: These data were collected by the National Agricultural Statistics Service (NASS) during the last two weeks of April using sampling procedures to ensure every employer of agricultural workers had a chance of being selected. Two samples of farm operators are selected. First, NASS maintains a list of farms that hire farm workers. Farms on this list are classified by size and type. Those expected to employ large numbers of workers are selected with greater frequency than those hiring few or no workers. A second sample consists of segments of land scientifically selected from an area sampling frame. Each June, highly trained interviewers locate each selected land segment and identify every farm operating land within the sample segment's boundaries. The names of farms found in these area segments are matched against the NASS list of farms; those not found on the list are included in the Labor survey sample to represent all farms. This methodology is known as multiple frame sampling, with an area sample used to measure the incompleteness of the list. Additionally, a list of agricultural service firms was sampled in California and Florida. The survey reference week was April 11-17, 2010.

Reliability: Two types of errors, sampling and non-sampling, are always present in an estimate based on a sample survey. Both types affect the "accuracy" of the estimates. Sampling error occurs because a complete census is not taken. The sampling error measures the variation in estimates from the average of all possible samples. An estimate of 100 with a sampling error of 1 would mean that chances are 19 out of 20 that the estimates from all possible samples averaged together would be between 98 and 102; which is the survey estimate, plus or minus two times the sampling error. The sampling error expressed as a percent of the estimate is called the relative sampling error. The relative sampling error for number of hired workers at the U.S. level is normally less than 5 percent. The relative sampling error for the number of hired workers generally ranged between 10 and 20 percent at the regional level. The U.S. all hired farm worker wage rate had a relative sampling error of 0.9 percent. The relative sampling error was 1.0 percent for the combined field and livestock worker wage rate. Relative sampling errors for the all hired farm worker wage rate generally ranged between 2 and 6 percent at the regional levels. Relative sampling errors for wage rates published by type of farm and economic class of farm generally ranged between 2 and 20 percent at the regional level. Non-sampling errors can occur in a complete census as well as in sample surveys. They are caused by the inability to obtain correct information from each operation sampled, differences in interpreting questions or definitions, and mistakes in editing, coding or processing the data. Special efforts are taken at each step of the survey to minimize non-sampling errors.

Revision Policy: Farm labor information is subject to revision the next time the information is published or the year after the original publication date. The basis for revision must be supported by additional data that directly affect the level of the estimate. Worker numbers and wage rates for January 2010 and April 2009 were subject to revision with this report. If any revisions were made to previous data, they are reprinted in this report for your information, and they are identified as such.